

EVSRA SAFETY PLAN FOR REGATTAS AT LAKE WHITEHURST

INTRODUCTION

The Regatta Commission of the Eastern Virginia Scholastic Rowing Association recognizes that safety is the joint responsibility of regatta organizers, participants and officials. Although there are certain risks inherent in any water activity, we are committed to conducting our events with good judgment and common sense. EVSRA has run regattas for a number of years without injury or serious incident. This written safety plan is an attempt to perpetuate the policies that have made this record possible, to improve upon past safety practices, and to communicate our safety expectations to all regatta participants, volunteers, and officials. Publishing a plan in writing is an important part of our efforts, begun in early 2005, to regularize EVSRA regatta operations. This plan governs all regattas conducted at Lake Whitehurst and compliance with its terms is a condition of participation at that venue. EVSRA reserves the right to amend this plan from time to time.

REGATTA COMMISSION SAFETY OFFICERS

The Regatta Director is responsible for implementation and enforcement of this plan for all EVSRA events conducted at Lake Whitehurst. The Commission shall appoint a Safety Officer whose primary responsibilities shall be implementation and enforcement of this plan on the day of each regatta. Unless otherwise specified, the Regatta Director shall serve as Safety Officer. The Regatta Director and/or Safety Officer will identify physicians and emergency medical providers that are on site during each regatta. Commission will endeavor to provide a physician or emergency medical technician on site for all regattas. The Safety Officer will be responsible for delivering a safety briefing to the coaches prior to the start of each regatta that includes information on the weather plan, rower safety, injuries, and general grounds safety concerns. The Safety Officer is also responsible for documentation of any medical emergency occurring during the regatta. The Safety Officer will ensure the regatta site traffic management plan is updated with any directives from the Norfolk Botanical Gardens and safety/security procedures are enforced.

CO-ORDINATION WITH RACE OFFICIALS

The Regatta Commission shall coordinate implementation of this safety plan with the Chief Referee. The plan is intended to complement Rules of Rowing established by The United States Rowing Association. In the event of a conflict between USRowing rules and this plan, the Rules of Rowing control Commission representatives and race officials shall act cooperatively to conduct an efficient and safe regatta. The Commission encourages decision making through consensus where practical. The Regatta Commission will provide all equipment, information and notices required by current Rules of Rowing. A copy of this safety plan and a map of the course showing mandatory traffic patterns shall be distributed to all regatta participants prior to the Pre-Regatta Meeting required by USRowing Rule 2-202. The Commission will schedule and advertise the time and location of the Pre-Regatta Meeting as part of regatta registration and sign-in. In accordance with USRowing Rule 2-101, regatta volunteers will be instructed that the

primary duty of every race official is to provide for the safety of competitors and officials. Volunteers shall be instructed to follow the directions of race officials for all competitive activity. Under Section Five of this plan, racing may be suspended by the Chief Referee, the Regatta Director, or the Safety Officer at any time due to adverse weather conditions. If suspended, racing shall not be resumed until authorized by the Chief Referee. Racing will not be recommenced sooner than thirty minutes following a weather suspension.

COURSE AND EMERGENCY INFORMATION

In addition to the map required by Section 3.4 of this plan, the Regatta Commission shall devise and post in a conspicuous place at the regatta site the course diagram and instructions required by USRowing Rule 2-203(a). The Commission shall also clearly identify the location of the first aid stations, telephones and methods of summoning emergency assistance as required by USRowing Rule 2-203(b). This information shall be provided to regatta participants as part of the regatta registration package.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Regatta Commission will provide hand held VHF radios for the following officials and volunteers:

- ***Chief Referee***
- ***Chief Judge or other finish line official***
- ***Starter (if different from Chief Referee)***
- ***Starting Area Marshal Mid-Course Marshal***
- ***Official Assigned Commission Duty***
- ***Launch Operators for each on-water Referee***
- ***Launch Master***
- ***Safety Officer***
- ***Regatta Director***

Prior to each regatta, the Commission shall determine that each radio is fully charged and is capable of sending and receiving radio communications. All VHF radios shall remain on during the entire regatta and shall remain tuned to the regatta operations channel except in the case of the emergency procedure described in the following section. Each person issued a VHF radio shall be responsible for monitoring the regatta operations channel. Persons responding to an emergency or coordinating an emergency response shall immediately switch to the regatta emergency channel. Persons not directly involved the emergency response or coordination shall continue to monitor the operations channel. In the event of an emergency, the Safety Officer or,

in the case of his or her unavailability, the Regatta Director, shall be responsible for determining from primary responders whether additional assistance is required, and if so, for coordinating a timely and efficient response. The Regatta Director, Regatta Office Manager and Safety Officer shall each maintain an operational cell phone to be used for communicating with land based 911 services. Commission representatives summoning 911 assistance shall instruct emergency crews that the regatta grounds are located at **NORFOLK BOTANICAL GARDEN, 6700 AZALEA GARDEN ROAD, NORFOLK, VIRGINIA**. Unless conditions clearly warrant otherwise, emergency crews should be instructed to respond to the picnic area adjacent to the main gate. The Regatta Commission shall post a prominent notice in the Regatta Office clearly stating the 911 call procedure and the address of the regatta grounds listed above. The Regatta Director or Safety Officer shall document all such injuries and actions taken by regatta officials.

All VHF radios shall be returned to the Regatta Office at the conclusion of the regatta. The Regatta Office Manager shall be responsible for collecting and securing all radios.

SAFETY INSPECTIONS

In cooperation with the Chief Referee, the Dockmaster shall conduct or confirm that a race official will conduct, a pre-launch safety inspection of all race boats participating in each regatta event.

- 1. Each such inspection shall confirm that race boats comply with safety and equipment requirements specified in Article Three of the Rules of Rowing in effect at the time of the regatta. No race boat shall be permitted on the course without the following minimal equipment. A bowball that complies with USRowing Rule 3-105. Oars that comply with USRowing Rule 3-108. Footgear releases that comply with USRowing Rule 3-109.*
- 2. If used, a coxswain enclosure that complies with USRowing Rule 3-110.*

WEATHER PLAN

The Regatta Commission shall monitor both observed and predicted weather for conditions that may present hazards to the safe conduct of regatta operations or competition. A reasonable time prior to the first scheduled launch, the Safety Officer shall review available weather forecasts, including NOAA weather broadcasts, and confirm that weather conditions predicted for Lake Whitehurst are likely to be safe for regatta operations and competition. The Safety Officer shall continue to monitor NOAA weather broadcasts each hour until the conclusion of the regatta. Not more than one hour prior to the first scheduled launch, the Safety Officer and/or Chief Referee shall personally observe the course and starting area in order to confirm that conditions are safe for regatta operations and competition. The Commission shall install and monitor a tone alert radio capable of monitoring and receiving automatic weather alerts transmitted via the NOAA Specific Area Message Encoding system. The radio shall be programmed to receive S.A.M.E. messages for the Cities of Norfolk, Virginia Beach, and Chesapeake and surrounding localities. Racing shall not be permitted if, in the opinion of the Chief Referee, the Regatta Director or the Safety Officer, course conditions endanger the safety of competitors, officials or volunteers. Once suspended, racing may only be resumed within the discretion of the Chief

referee. Racing shall not be resumed for until at least thirty minutes after a weather suspension. Racing shall immediately cease and the course shall be evacuated if thunder is heard or lightning is observed by any race official or member of the Regatta Commission. In the event of course evacuation necessitated by thunder or lightning, regatta participants shall follow the instructions of officials concerning where to exit the course and where to seek shelter. In general, participants should return to the launch and recovery area in the case of thunder unaccompanied by lightning. If lightning is observed, regatta participants should proceed to the nearest shore and seek shelter away from trees and other tall objects. In the event the course is cleared for weather conditions or other emergency, the Dock Master shall be primarily responsible for determining through consultation with coaches that all crews have cleared the course. The Dock Master shall require each coach to report when his or her crews have cleared the course. The Motor Launch Administrator shall be responsible for determining that all motor launches and occupants have been recovered from the race course in the event the course is cleared for weather conditions or other emergency.

FIRST AID AND SAFETY EQUIPMENT

The Regatta Commission shall provide the following safety equipment at all regattas:

1. An adequate number of motor launches capable, when occupied, of maintaining a speed necessary to follow a race but without unnecessary wake. Each launch shall carry personal flotation devices for each occupant of the launch plus two extra PFDs. The Commission shall expend its best efforts to provide launches whose hull design minimizes wake, all as contemplated by USRowing Rule 2-207. One of the motor launches provided by the commission shall also function as a safety launch. The safety launch shall be equipped with an adequately stocked first aid kit and ten emergency blankets. At least one additional adequately stocked first aid kit located in the Regatta Office.
2. The communication equipment specified in Section Five of this Plan.
3. The weather radio specified in Section Seven of this Plan.

WATER EMERGENCIES

All volunteers and officials shall be instructed to observe the following procedures for emergencies occurring on Lake Whitehurst:

The official nearest the emergency is designated as the first responder. If an official is not available, the nearest member of the Regatta Commission shall be the first responder until an official arrives on scene.

Upon arrival at the emergency site, the first responder shall assume control of scene, determine the nature of the emergency and initiate a responsible reaction commencing with a head count of any victims in the water. The safety launch should proceed immediately to the scene of the emergency but lay off awaiting instructions from the first responder. Other boats in the area should also respond but remain in the perimeter of the emergency area awaiting instructions from the first responder. If victims are in the water or if it cannot be determined whether victims are in the water, motor launches responding to the emergency should stop their engines and enter the

area only after heads are counted and all crew members are accounted for. If racing crews are in the water, remember to account for the coxswain. Crews should be encouraged to stay with the boat and use oars as flotation devices. While awaiting recovery, crew members should be instructed to buddy up and monitor each other's safety. As promptly as possible after arriving at the scene of the emergency, the first responder shall notify the Safety Officer and Regatta Director of the nature of the emergency via the VHF regatta operations channel, request any required first aid supplies not available on the safety launch and, if necessary request 911 assistance. Radio communications should be shifted to the VHF channel designated for emergency communications at the first reasonable opportunity. In general, marine channel 72 will be used for emergency communications. Once notified of the emergency, the Safety Officer shall be responsible for requesting the assistance of the onsite regatta physician or emergency medical technician and, if required, coordinating transportation to the emergency site in the reserve launch. Once notified of the emergency, the Safety Officer shall proceed to the motor launch dock and coordinate a response in anticipation of landing victims. If 911 help has been requested, the Safety Officer shall be responsible for dispatching a guide to the causeway entry road who can direct emergency crews to the scene of the emergency. During early season regattas or cold weather, a principal concern for victims recovered from the water must be hypothermia. Victims should be covered with blankets and landed as promptly as possible. The Safety Director is responsible for bringing extra blankets to the motor launch dock in preparation for meeting persons who have been in the water. Until emergency crews or medical assistance arrive at the emergency scene, the first responder shall direct efforts to assist and care for victims. Within his or her discretion, the first responder may cede control of the scene to a person deemed more qualified to lend assistance. Nevertheless, it is extremely important that control of the scene remain under the direction of one person capable of coordinating a common sense response. At the conclusion of the emergency, the Regatta Director is responsible for coordinating any additional actions required by the event.

LAND EMERGENCIES.

All volunteers and officials shall be instructed to observe the following procedures for emergencies occurring on the regatta grounds:

The official nearest the emergency is designated as the first responder. If an official is not available, the nearest member of the Regatta Commission shall be the first responder. Upon arrival at the emergency site, the first responder shall assume control of scene, determine the nature of the emergency and initiate a responsible reaction. As promptly as possible after arriving at the scene of the emergency, the first responder shall notify the Safety Officer and Regatta Director of the nature of the emergency via the VHF regatta operations channel, request any required first aid supplies and, if necessary request 911 assistance. Radio communications should be shifted to the VHF channel designated for emergency communications at the first reasonable opportunity. In general, marine channel 72 will be used for emergency communications. Once notified of the emergency, the Safety Officer shall be responsible for requesting the assistance of the onsite regatta physician or emergency medical technician. Once notified of the emergency, the Safety Officer shall proceed to the scene and lend additional assistance to the victim. If 911 help has been requested, the Safety Officer shall be responsible for dispatching a guide to the causeway entry road who can direct emergency crews to the scene of the emergency. Until emergency crews or medical assistance arrive at the emergency scene,

the first responder shall direct efforts to assist and care for the victim. Within his or her discretion, the first responder may cede control of the scene to a person deemed more qualified to lend assistance. Nevertheless, it is extremely important that assistance remain under the direction of one person capable of coordinating a common sense response. At the conclusion of the emergency, the Regatta Director is responsible for coordinating any additional actions required by the event.

SAFETY SENSITIVE POSITIONS

The following volunteer positions are designated as safety sensitive:

- *Regatta Safety Director*
- *Regatta Office Manager*
- *Launch Master*
- *Launch Operators*
- *Dockmaster*
- *Race Course Marshal*
- *Grounds Marshall*

All volunteers assigned to safety sensitive positions shall receive special instruction concerning specific safety responsibilities for those positions.

Launch Operators shall be provided a laminated water resistant card summarizing response procedures for on-water emergencies. The reverse of the card shall depict the course diagram and mandatory traffic pattern.

IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

Compliance with this plan is mandatory commencing with the opening regatta for the season. The Commission shall distribute copies of its current safety plan to members of the Eastern Virginia Scholastic Rowing Association, participants in EVSRA regattas and, upon request, to other interested individuals. The Commission shall expend its best efforts to post a copy of its current safety plan on a publicly accessible website.

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COURSE SAFETY MAP

We ask that crews familiarize themselves with our race course before coming to the regatta. It's safer and more comfortable for everyone that way. Coxswains, in particular, must thoroughly understand the traffic patterns and safety advisories shown below.



